has been constituted for overseeing the setting up of an autonomous Food Safety and Standards Authority on the basis of the Food Safety and Standards Act (FSSA), 2006. Sections 4 to 10 (both inclusive), sections 87, 88, 91 and 101 of the FFSA, 2006 have been notified with effect from 15th October, 2007. The notification of these sections will enable the setting up of the Food Authority which would take up further steps for implementation of the Act.

(b) Under PFA Rules, 1955 the standards for food and beverages have been prescribed. There is no provision under the PFA Rules, 1955 to regulate advertisements as such. However, Rule 43-A of the PFA Rules 1955, provides that there shall be no advertisement of any food which is misleading or contravening the provisions of PFA Act 1954 or the Rules made there under.

The PFA Act, 1954 and Rules made there under are implemented by the State/UT Governments. For keeping a check on adulteration, they draw samples of various food products and take appropriate action under PFA rules, 1955.

(c) The final notification regarding regulations for labeling and disclosing the ingredients of the contents of products was issued *vide* GSR 491(E) dated 21.8.2006 (to come into effect on 20.8.2007). Some representations were received from manufacturing associations, trade bodies and individual industries pointing out practical difficulties in implementing the amended provisions. These difficulties were discussed with the industry and these provisions have been deferred till 20.2.2008. However, an expert group labeling and disclosing of ingredients, including representatives of industry and consumer organizations, constituted by the Ministry has deliberated over the issue and has submitted its recommendations. The Ministry has initiated the process of issuing the amended notification.

Medical colleges

588. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of registered medical colleges at present in the country;

(b) the increase expected in the number of these medical colleges in the next two years in the country;

(c) whether any plan in this regard has been formulated by Government; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): (a) to (d) Presently, there are 271 Medical Colleges in the country. Out of which, one 138 are in Government sector and 133 are in private sector. Out of 271, 192 are recognized Medical Colleges and opening of 79 Medical Colleges have been permitted by Central Government.

Permission for establishment of Medical Colleges and admission of students is granted by Central Government as per the provisions of IMC Act, 1956 and Establishment of Medical College Regulations, 1999. During the last two years, 29 new Medical Colleges have been established in the country. The increase in number of Medical Colleges in the next two years depends upon the number of applications received, evaulated by MCI and finally approved by Central Government.